

is beginning to show some signs of success?

I believe we all know the sensible answer to that question.

We must not yield.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MENENDEZ). The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FREE INTERNET ACCESS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, since its inception, the Internet has provided a powerful economic boost to our Nation, especially in rural areas. It has become an important everyday tool for millions of Americans, a valuable educational resource, and a powerful mechanism for communication.

To ensure the Internet's benefits are available to as many people as possible, Congress should reduce obstacles to broadband access. One way to accomplish this goal is to prevent taxes from being imposed on Internet access, because such taxes will only drive up the overall cost of the use of the Internet.

The Internet Tax Freedom Act, first passed by Congress in 1998, established a moratorium on State and local governments' ability to tax Internet access. Extended in 2004, that moratorium will expire on November 1—less than 2 months from today. Legislation has been introduced in both the House and Senate to extend the Internet tax moratorium. I have been supportive of such legislation and expressed support when the Senate Commerce Committee explored the issue at a hearing on May 23 of this year.

Our chairman, Senator INOUE, has been very supportive of the concept of keeping taxes off the Internet.

Tremendous investment, growth, and innovation in broadband deployment has occurred since the moratorium was first adopted. In order for this progress to continue, Congress should extend the Internet tax moratorium before it expires this fall.

If it is not extended by November 1, more states could take the opportunity to quickly pass laws and impose new taxes on the Internet. Such taxes would only serve to expand the digital divide between those who can afford broadband access and those who cannot.

The Internet has allowed States such as Alaska to compete on a more level playing field. Alaskans are now able to market their goods to customers in the lower 48 and around the world, which is especially beneficial for small businesses located in remote areas. Improved broadband access has also eliminated distance barriers for education and medicine, providing rural areas with a higher quality of life.

Faster, cheaper Internet access also helps drive America's economic engine and creates new jobs. Continued broadband deployment will help ensure America keeps this competitive edge. Without it, our Nation will fall behind in the global economy. If discriminatory taxes are imposed on Internet access, our country will face a real danger, and the rest of the world will no longer look to the United States for Internet innovations.

The date the Internet tax moratorium is set to expire—November 1—is fast approaching. It is my hope Congress will act to extend this important moratorium before that deadline arrives.

While the expiration of the Internet tax moratorium is the most pressing broadband issue before Congress right now, several more issues should also be addressed to encourage greater broadband deployment and availability in this country. First and foremost, universal service should be updated so that rural America has the same broadband opportunities as the rest of America. This will require the work of both Congress and the Federal Communications Commission.

Additionally, the Government should try to stay away from doing things that would reverse the recent policy trends of encouraging broadband deployment through free market principles.

I sincerely hope that the Congress will act to extend this moratorium in a prompt fashion.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

9/11 REMEMBRANCES IN PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise for a few moments to do something that I had hoped to do yesterday but didn't have the opportunity in the midst of our hearings on Iraq and so much else going on. I don't want to miss the opportunity to commend so many people in Somerset County in Pennsylvania, who, on two occasions—Monday night and, of course, yesterday—were observing the 9/11 remembrances.

In the case of the Monday night event I attended at the Somerset Alliance Church in Somerset, PA, I wanted to commend them for so much. There are several groups—I will not mention names—such as the National Park Service, of course, that helped bring that event together, as well as doing so much other work at the crash site; the families of Flight 93, the Flight 93 Advisory Commission, the Flight 93 Memorial Task Force, and so many others too numerous to name.

On Monday night, the service I attended was a night of grief, a night of gratitude, and I think a night of renewal. There was grief in the obvious sense that we still grieve for those who perished heroically on September 11, 2001, at every site—in this case in Shanksville, Somerset County, PA. Certainly, it was a night to grieve.

It was also a night to express gratitude in two ways at least: One, gratitude for those who gave their lives heroically so that the plane crashed in Pennsylvania instead of coming here to destroy the Capitol or some other part of our Government, and where more lives might have been lost, as well as, I think, to express gratitude to those brave Americans on that plane, but also to express the gratitude of the people who came after that tragedy in Somerset County, where the families, in particular, wanted to use this Monday night ceremony to thank the people of Somerset County. So many people have provided some measure of comfort over all these 6 years to the families who loved and lost. So I think it was also a night for gratitude.

Finally, it was a night to express our shared feeling of renewal, renewing not just our commitment to take care of those families and to do all we can to help them, but also our collective renewal to continue the fight for the ages—the fight against terrorism all across our country and across the world. So it was a night to renew our commitment to that basic shared promise that we make to each other that we will never stop fighting against terrorism, and we will be ever vigilant against this threat to all of America and, indeed, to the world.

I wanted to pay tribute to those in Somerset County who came together this past Monday night for a ceremony entitled "The Spirit of Community: A Service of Remembrance for the Passengers and Crew of Flight 93." I thank, in particular, the families for paying tribute to those in the community of Somerset County who have helped them.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. McCASKILL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

EASTERN CONGO

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I rise to speak on a situation now developing to which I hope my colleagues will pay some attention. If we get involved at an early phase, it may be something we can head off rather than have it develop full scale. And I will

have some pictures. I am talking about the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We have seen a situation there where thousands of people have been dying on a monthly basis. It had been stabilizing some with the U.N. policing force that was in the area, the largest in the world. Now it is escalating again. It had stabilized. It is something we have to get after right now and, if we can, it might be such that we can stop it from spreading. But we have to pay some attention to it and look at it now.

Not even 12 months after their first free elections in 40 years, the fragile stability of the entire country is at stake. Senator DURBIN and I visited there about a year and a half ago. It was starting to achieve some stability. They hadn't voted yet for the election. Now we are seeing the present situation in eastern Congo, specifically in an area called North Kivu, gravely deteriorating. According to the U.N. relief agencies, we have seen nearly 40,000 people displaced this month. We saw another 100,000 displaced in June, in addition to the 100,000 displaced in January, all from this year. So nearly a quarter million people have been displaced in this one region.

These displacements come from rising tensions between the renegade General Nkunda and those loyal to the Congolese Government. Nkunda says he is protecting the Tutsi-Congolese minority from the Congolese Government and from the Hutu militias. These are militias that fled Rwanda after committing genocide there in 1994. So this has a connection to Rwanda. That is what is so deadly about it. We have seen it activated before, and it is deadly.

Neither General Nkunda nor the Hutu militias have ever been disarmed, raging havoc on the civilian population for years. The fighting between Nkunda's rebels and Congolese forces has spilled into the Virunga Mountains where the mountain gorillas reside, the sole place where this endangered species lives, a species so close to extinction already, yet nine were killed this year in fighting.

President Kagame of Rwanda said Monday that Nkunda has legitimate political grievances against the Congolese Government. We have to call him on that. President Kagame stated Nkunda was simply protecting a section of the Congolese from extermination, but there are no reported actions against the Tutsi-Congolese.

This can be kind of convoluted on names, but this is how it started the first time around, a rebel general saying: I am protecting the people in the minority. Then they started attacking the people. People fled into refugee camps, and more died. When you flee for your life in these areas of the Congo, there is not always another town or village to go into. One area where there was fighting over the weekend took place in a settlement village—a refugee camp from a conflict 10

years earlier. It burned the village simply because the people could not return to their previous homes. Now, due to fighting, they are homeless and fleeing once again.

I want to show a few pictures because it always seems we talk about numbers when we talk about distant places. People say: Well, I am sure that goes on all the time. It doesn't. It doesn't need to go on at all. It helps people to see that there are real people who suffer.

Here is a picture of a mother who brought her child into a therapeutic feeding camp because the child was dying of starvation due to constant movement of the family from village to village. The child became sick when they had no other place to go but the jungle to seek refuge. That happens when there is no stabilized place; children die in particular. Others do too.

Here is a 2-year-old who caught malaria due to the family hiding for so long in the bush after having fled their home. Malnourishment was quick to follow, as the family could find no food in the bush. So we have a 2-year-old with malaria, malnourished, on the verge of death.

This room is where about 75 to 90 women and children stay when they are receiving medical treatment and food supplements from a village clinic in the village of Kitchanga in North Kivu Province of Congo. This shows the crowded conditions into which people are forced.

Here is a 3-year-old who was diagnosed with malaria, tuberculosis, and malnourishment from hiding in the jungle with his family. Every breath he took was preceded by a raspy cough due to the stage of tuberculosis. His mother wanted to get him to a health clinic earlier but had to hide the family in the bush for several weeks because the road into town had been blocked by a militia.

These are real people suffering, dying because of this situation.

This is a 3-year-old diagnosed with malaria. They began treatment for the malaria, and his body rejected the treatment. They found that while he had been eating about once a day, he was anemic due to lack of nutrition in the food his family had been able to find in the jungle as they hid from militia groups that had burned their village and home to the ground. His body began to shut down. He rejected the oral and IV treatments. This 3-year-old passed away within 6 hours of rejecting the IV treatments, 15 minutes after this photo was taken.

These are real lives and real people. I have shown a few of them from this raging war that goes on while we have a blind eye to it.

Sexual violence and rape is also on the rise in Congo. The Washington Post reported the intensity and frequency of the rape is worse in the DRC than anywhere else in the world. The U.N. emergency relief agencies report that 4,500 cases of sexual violence have been re-

ported since January of 2007 in this one province alone. We are looking at, in less than 9 months, 4,500 cases of sexual violence in one province. Women are brutally raped in front of crowds, families, husbands, resulting in serious physical and emotional trauma. I visited a hospital with Senator DURBIN in the eastern city of Goma where women could be treated for ailments due to brutal rapes. Because of their condition, many women are outcasts from their community and families, and the pain goes on.

I have made a number of trips to Africa, most recently to Ethiopia in January. We must be engaged in this continent. It is a humanitarian cause. It is a growing strategic cause. As China tries to integrate more into Africa and militant Islamists engage more as well, we need to be engaged—if not for a strategic reason, look at the faces of the people who are dying—in helping them out.

I urge my colleagues to examine this troubling situation. Today, there will be a letter circulating to Secretary Rice urging the State Department to take more action against these atrocities in a forgotten area of the world and find ways to be an increasing force for good in this part of the world. We can help with the malnourishment situation. Ultimately, we also have to speak to the Rwandan Government and to the Congolese Government and to the U.S. forces in that area to take care of the people and to knock it off and for us to step up our engagement.

Ultimately, I speak for the people of Congo because I think we should care about them. It is our goodness that leads to our greatness as a country. It is something we should be interested in. We said about Rwanda: Never again. Now we are seeing even sections of that fight continue 15 years later and infecting Congo. We said never again; we should mean never again. We should be engaged. We need to become the kind of people who are strong to protect the weak.

This week, we had an excellent report from General Petraeus on military action in a key part of the world. I am delighted that press was delivered and that we can now discuss the political solution. I don't think we are on an effective political track. We need to do that. I just came from a consumer product safety hearing on Chinese products, the failure of those products. We need to address that. But we also should not ignore places that are less obvious to us in the world, where there is carnage and deprivation and humanitarian need. We can be more involved.

I urge my colleagues to sign on to this letter. I urge them to get interested. Let us mean "never again" and do something about it.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ATTORNEY GENERAL NOMINEE

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, the Senate will soon be asked to confirm a new Attorney General. For the past several months, our Democratic colleagues have pleaded for this very thing. They have spoken at length about the importance of the Justice Department and the urgent need to install new leadership there as soon as possible.

They do not want to make the pick. All they want is someone with "integrity" and "experience," who "respects the rule of law," and who can "hit the ground running." These are their words. The senior Senator from New York has assured us he and his colleagues will not "obstruct or impede" such a nominee—again, their own words. This was their plea and their promise.

It now appears, however, that despite these promises, some of our Democratic colleagues may indeed obstruct and impede.

Roll Call reported Monday that Democrats on the Judiciary Committee may intentionally—intentionally—delay confirmation of the next nominee, whoever he or she is, in order to extract still more administration documents in the U.S. attorneys matter. It cited one Democratic leadership aide as saying that "it would not be surprising if Democrats decide to take their time on the nomination as a way to force the administration's hand."

So our Democratic colleagues have repeatedly told us that the central concern in all of this was the health and well-being of the Justice Department. Yet now they say they are willing to hold up the new Attorney General in exchange for more documents related to their fishing expedition—which, so far, has been long on fishermen and short on fish.

Let's remember that over the last 7 months, the Senate Judiciary Committee has held no fewer than 13 hearings on the U.S. attorneys matter—13 hearings. The administration has cooperated extensively in this process. It has provided more than 8,000 pages of documents, along with dozens of witnesses in both public hearings and private interviews.

None of these documents, none of these witnesses, none of these hearings has produced evidence of illegality on the part of the administration in the U.S. attorneys matter. Despite their best efforts, our Democratic friends have candidly and publicly conceded they have yet to find—again, in their own words—a "smoking gun," which is not to say these investigations have been a complete waste of time for Senate Democrats.

While the Senate Judiciary Committee was holding hearings, the

Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee was hard at work too. According to the Washington Post, as the Judiciary Committee hearings began, the Democrats' campaign committee began to raise money off the matter.

Here, in fact, is a copy of one of the DSCC's fundraising solicitations. It points to the U.S. attorneys matter and asks for a donation. Interesting timing.

Well, Madam President, as the adage goes: The proof is in the pudding. Our Democratic colleagues will help prove their concern for the Justice Department was genuine and not motivated by partisan politics by confirming a nominee in a timely manner.

Now, we know what the precedents are. Since the Carter administration, it has taken, on average—let me say this again—since the Carter administration, it has taken, on average, about 3 weeks from nomination to confirmation for a nominee for Attorney General—3 weeks, on average, from nomination to confirmation for Attorneys General since the Carter administration.

Some nominees have actually taken less time. Benjamin Civiletti and Janet Reno, the second Attorney General nominees of President Carter and President Clinton, were confirmed in 12 and 13 days, respectively, after their nominations. Richard Thornburgh, President Reagan's third Attorney General, was confirmed 17 days after he was nominated.

Now is the chance for our Democratic colleagues to prove they meant what they said. If they were serious when they cried out for new leadership at the Justice Department, they will follow Senate precedent. They will carefully weigh the qualifications of the nominee and vote in a timely fashion, as has been the case since the Carter administration.

If, instead, our colleagues intentionally delay the nominee and hold him or her hostage, they will show the American people that their concern for the Department was insincere and that they simply did not mean it when, as the senior Senator from New York put it: "This Nation needs a new attorney general, and it can't afford to wait."

In these times, it is especially important that the Senate act promptly. We are, after all, at war, and as the distinguished ranking member of the committee has noted, apart from the Defense Department, no Department of the executive branch is more important to defending our Nation than the Department of Justice.

So, Madam President, we need to act. I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I just note, listening to the Republican leader, it is a little difficult to accuse us of delaying a nomination that has not yet been made. This is a new one.

The way it works is the President actually has to nominate somebody be-

fore we can consider the nomination. So before we rush out here and start accusing our side of delaying a nomination that has not yet been made, they might want to direct their attention to the White House. They are the ones who have an obligation to make the nomination.

PAY-GO

Mr. CONRAD. Madam President, I have come to the floor because at the end of last week the ranking member of the Budget Committee made a speech on pay-go in which he suggested it is a meaningless exercise and that it makes no contribution to fiscal responsibility. I come to the floor because I beg to differ, and I think I have a responsibility, as chairman of the Budget Committee, to give the other side of the story.

The Senate pay-go rule says that any new mandatory spending or tax cuts must be offset or get a supermajority vote. So if you want new spending or new tax cuts, you can have them, but you either have to pay for them or get a supermajority vote. That is the Senate rule. It is a good rule, and it has been effective at contributing to fiscal discipline.

If we look back in history, here is what we see, as demonstrated on this chart. We had a strong pay-go rule in effect from 1991 to 2000, and the deficit was reduced each and every year. In fact, we moved into surplus—in fact, a surplus so large that for 2 years we stopped using the Social Security trust fund to fund the operating expenses of the Federal Government. That is what happened with a strong pay-go rule.

Then our colleagues on the other side took control of both Chambers, took control of the White House, weakened the pay-go rule, and look what happened to deficits afterward. The surplus was squandered. We moved into deficits that grew year after year after year to record levels.

Now we have restored pay-go, and we are moving back toward a balanced budget. Pay-go, in fact, is working. The Senate pay-go scorecard shows a positive balance of \$450 million. So, in fact, pay-go is working. Every bill coming out of conference this year has been paid for. Every one that has come out of conference has been paid for, or more than paid for. Pay-go also has provided a significant deterrent, preventing many costly bills from ever being offered. Let me say I know that because as the Budget Committee chairman, I am besieged by Members who want to somehow get around pay-go. When we tell them: No, we are going to insist that things be paid for, it is quite remarkable how many of these things go away or are reduced so that they can be paid for.

Now, Senator GREGG himself, in a previous incarnation, was a strong supporter of pay-go. Here is what he said previously:

The second budget discipline, which is pay-go, essentially says if you are going to add a